

## **Appendix B – SAMPLE Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center Stipulations**

***Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center  
Special Use Permit Stipulations 2015***

This document outlines the requirements and operational procedures used at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center for 2015. They are made a part of your special use permit requirements that must be adhered to.

**Terminology/Glossary:**

This section clarifies terminology and names used throughout this document and in other documentation related to the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center area operation.

**Bear Stop:** Shuttle Bus loading/unloading occurs at this bus stop located on the south end of the middle parking lot. A maximum of two shuttle buses at a time can wait here for a maximum of 10 minutes.

**Bus Parking Lot:** The lot located 1/3 mile before the end of Glacier Spur Road. It has a gravel surface and is closed from 7:30pm to 7:30am by a gate. Tour operator and taxi vehicles will wait here until their designated time to pick up their customers. A portable toilet is provided for use of the drivers and one or two additional toilets for their customers. Other special use permit holders also have access to the bus parking lot.

**Bus Shelter:** An open-air, permanent structure located on the turnaround near the Pavilion parking lot at the *Goat stop*. Tour bus passengers from tours other than Alaska Coach Tours, or Holland America Princess load/unload their buses from this location. The minimum vehicle length for the *Goat stop* is 22'. As in all other stops, the maximum wait time for vehicles is 10 minutes.

**Driver Registration:** To maintain a record of passengers delivered to the center complex, drivers of all taxis, shuttles and tours **other than** Holland America Princess Alaska, Alaska Coach Tours, and Gastineau Guiding must enter their company, time, number of passengers broken out between adults and passengers of 15 years of age or less, at the self-registration stations located at their respective drop off and pick up areas. ~~Drivers should also note if their passengers are prepaid or not prepaid for visitor center entry.~~ *Changing in 2016.* Drivers who use the Goat Stop and Tern Stop are also responsible to write the pickup time for their bus on the whiteboard provided at the stop.

**Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act:** Congress authorized the Forest Service to charge a fee for entry or use of an area or facility (site fee) and for commercial transporting and guiding (special use fee). The Juneau Ranger District collects special use fees under this program from tour operators and guides who bring customers to Forest Service lands including developed and dispersed sites. ~~JRD also collects site fees from some tour operators for entry into the visitor center.~~ *Changing in 2016 to apply to a broader area.* Approximately 90% of the site fees and 30-40% of special use fees are returned to the visitor center to fund recreation, wildlife, educational and visitor information service programs.

**Goat stop:** Tour bus loading/unloading takes place at this stop in front of the bus shelter, near the Pavilion parking lot. Only tour operators with vehicles 22' or more in length can use this stop and wait times can't exceed 10 minutes. Drivers must write their passenger pickup time on the whiteboard.

**Guides:** Group leaders who are employed by the tour operator to share knowledge, answer questions and lead groups to specific locations at the visitor center area away from their vehicle.

**Interpreters:** Forest Service employees who comprise the seasonal staff at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center area and who assist all visitors.

**Kiosk:** A small, self-service information structure located on the right as you enter the Pavilion parking lot, near the flag poles. It has large windows and contains daily announcements and brochures.

**Tern Stop:** Coach loading/unloading area located along the road south of the flag poles and used by HAP Alaska and Alaska Coach Tours. Drivers must write their passenger pickup time on the whiteboard.

~~**Non-prepaid Customer:** These are individuals whose tour fee does not include the visitor center site fee. If they wish to enter the visitor center they pay at the front desk in the center or the tiny bookstore near the Pavilion. They may also be referred to as “non-prepaid passengers.” Changing in 2016.~~

**Pavilion:** An open-air structure between the Pavilion parking lot and the Mendenhall Lakeshore where visitors can observe live beaver or fish cams, interpretive displays and can sometimes listen to presentations by interpreters.

**Pavilion Parking Lot:** The parking lot at the end of Glacier Spur Road accessing the visitor center area. It is adjacent to the Pavilion and is for use by disabled individuals, some private vehicles on a first come-first serve basis and it contains the *Porcupine Stop* for commercial vans and taxis.

**Permit Holder:** The legal entity named in the special use authorization for operating on National Forest lands. These may also be referred to as the “tour operator”.

**Porcupine Stop:** Loading/unloading area for taxis and vans under 22 feet. Located along the south edge of the Pavilion Parking Lot, and previously known as the taxi parking area, but parking is no longer permitted and wait times can’t exceed 10 minutes (same as other stops).

~~**Prepaid Customer:** Customers whose tour cost includes the visitor center site fee. Tour operator collects this fee and is billed by the Forest Service. Also referred to as “prepaid passengers.” Changing in 2016.~~

**Middle Parking Lot:** The parking lot located approximately 100 feet south of the *Goat Stop*. It is open to private vehicles and RVs. On the southeast corner of this lot, near the exit, is the *Bear Stop* for shuttle buses. This lot also contains the *Salmon Stop* in the northwest corner to be used by some tour operators when other loading/unloading stops are full.

**Shuttles:** Shuttle buses drop off passengers at the *Bear Stop* in the middle parking lot before loading departing passengers for their next destination. These buses do not wait in the bus parking lot; they unload their passengers then immediately load any waiting passengers before departing.

**Special Use Permit or Authorization:** All tour operators who deliver customers to the Visitor Center Area must have a special use permit. This permit authorizes the permit holder to conduct business at specific locations on National Forest lands. The permit includes a fee and a number of mandatory requirements. The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act program requirements are included in the permit.

**Special-Use-Permit fee:** This fee is collected under the terms of the special use permit and is separate from the site fee. It applies to all customers regardless of age or whether they enter the visitor center.

**Tour Operator:** This is the individual or company that runs a tour business. They may also be referred to as “permit holder.” Their vehicle may remain in the bus lot waiting for return of their passengers or

they may leave the site after dropping passengers. Most tour operators (with exception of Gastineau Guides) are not a “guide” and can NOT accompany customers outside of their vehicles.

**Visitor Center Interpretive Site:** This term encompasses the high use area surrounding the visitor center building. It includes the parking lots, loading and unloading areas, the Pavilion, the nearby shore of Mendenhall Lake, Photo-Point, Steep Creek, Trail of Time and East Glacier Trails. ~~There is no charge for using any of the facilities or any of the interpretive services offered outside the Visitor Center building other than the special use permit fee. Changing in 2016.~~

~~**Visitor Center site fee:** This fee is charged only for visitors who wish to enter the visitor center facility to view the exhibits, theater and observation area. Children 15 and under are not charged this fee (but they are still charged for the permit fee). If customers wish to use the restroom or visit the bookstore in the center they may do so free of charge. Changing in 2016.~~

**Visitor Center:** This building contains a theater, bookstore, observatory with large windows overlooking the glacier, and multiple exhibits. ~~A fee is charged for entry. Fee area expanding in 2016.~~

~~**Wristbands:** The Forest Service provides these to tour companies for prepaid customers. Tour companies must include prepaid tours as part of their operating plan to provide this service. They are colored differently each year, and provide proof that the customer can enter the visitor center without further payment. Changing in 2016.~~

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## General Stipulations

1. Permit holders shall comply with all the terms and conditions of the Federal Land Recreation Enhancement Act as outlined in this document and on the special use permit.
- ~~2. There are two categories of passengers coming to the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center complex:
  - a) Passengers who have their entry to the visitor center prepaid and are issued a wristband.
  - b) Passengers who are delivered by bus, shuttle, or taxi but have not prepaid for entering the visitor center. Buses, vans and taxis will not mix these passengers. Changing in 2016.~~
3. All buses must be clearly marked with the company name to be readily identifiable. Buses other than shuttles must have some kind of unique number or name that identifies them clearly for their boarding passengers.
- ~~4. All tour operators selling a prepaid tour will be furnished with wristbands to provide their passengers. Tour operators will take precautions to minimize loss of the wristbands and will contact the visitor center in a timely fashion should more bands be needed. Tour operators are required to return any unused wristbands at the end of September, or they will be billed for them. Opened boxes of wristbands must be returned to the visitor center staff in distinct bundles of 100 or increments of 100 (such as 300, 500, etc.) Changing in 2016.~~
5. Sales of products or services are not allowed in the Visitor Center Interpretive Site, including photographs.
6. Commercial video or photography typically requires a separate special use permit. If companies are contracting with a third party to conduct filming, the contractor needs to have a commercial film permit, regardless if the outfitter/guide is providing the footage to clients as a service or using footage for advertising. For additional information and clarification on this issue, contact your permit administrator at the Juneau Ranger District office, 907-586-8800.
7. Filmmakers and photographers working for permit holders will not detract from the experience of visitors to the site.

8. Tour operators will have a procedure for addressing passengers who are left at the center. This procedure will be included in the operating plan or communicated in writing to visitor center staff so they can assist these passengers.
  9. There is **one location designated for smoking in the Pavilion Parking lot**. Smoking will not be allowed at any other location. Cigarettes are to be disposed of only at smoking receptacles, or in your vehicle's ashtray. E-cigarettes (smokeless) are treated the same as other cigarettes.
  10. **No food is allowed** at the Visitor Center Interpretive Site in order to provide safe bear viewing. This information **MUST** be shared with your clients prior to their arrival.
  11. It is mandatory that tour or shuttle bus/van/taxi drivers **provide a bear safety orientation** and/or a laminated USFS-approved bear safety pamphlet to all passengers prior to arrival at the visitor center interpretive site during the high use bear season. The tour company will be notified when your drivers must institute the bear safety orientations.
  12. Picking up passengers near the Visitor Center without prior arrangement is only allowed by shuttle bus tours and only at the Bear stop. Taxi companies are not authorized to search for customers near the Visitor Center parking lots; taxis are only authorized for pre-arranged pickups.
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### Onsite Guiding

~~Only Gastineau Guides holds a permit for guiding and only Gastineau Guides can accompany clients away from their vehicles. Could change in 2016, following prospectus.~~

### Reporting Use

1. Use will be reported and tracked by drivers providing numbers of all passengers delivered to the Visitor Center Interpretive Site. Refer to the Tour Bus Operator/Driver Requirements in the last section for details about reporting use. Billings for the visitor center site fee shall be reconciled annually against the fee payments made, ~~and validated by return count of unused wristbands assigned to the permit holder earlier in the season. Changing in 2016.~~ Special use permit fees will be calculated from use numbers provided to the Forest Service. Tour operator reported use figures will be compared against driver registration data. Tour operators are responsible for ensuring their drivers report use accurately when they sign in. **This is not a substitute for the permit holder maintaining records of use.**
2. Although there is no site fee for children 15 years and under, the **special use fee is charged for all passengers regardless of age.**
3. Permit holders remain responsible for reporting all use, this will include children 15 and under, ~~prepaid and non-prepaid customers (Changing in 2016)~~ and use that occurs outside of visitor center hours as specified in their permit.

### Fee Collections and Payments:

#### **Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Payment Option:**

~~Permit holders who choose to collect the site fee for the visitor center are awarded a 10% discount on the price to help cover costs of collecting the fee and providing passengers with a wristband (which indicates their prepaid status). The payment schedule and payment due dates for wristbands is the same as the payment schedule for special-use fees. Changing in 2016.~~

These payment schedules estimate use numbers for the entire season and splits billings into three installments. The billing for the first payment is due in April. The second payment is due in June. The third payment is due in July or August. The Forest Service shall reconcile annually the actual fee

against fee payments made, and validated by return count of unused wristbands. The holder shall pay any additional fees owed for the past season'

~~All permit holders have the option of delivering passengers who have not prepaid for entry to the visitor center (they will not be provided wristbands). If these customers choose to enter the visitor center they will pay the \$3 site fee inside the visitor center or at the tiny bookstore near the Pavilion. Changing in 2016.~~

#### **General:**

- ~~1. All special use permit holders are required to clearly inform customers whether or not the tour or trip package includes the Visitor Center site fee as part of their tour. Changing in 2016.~~
- ~~2. The site fee for use of the visitor center includes:
  - \$3.00 for each wristband purchased at the visitor center counter, or,
  - \$2.70 fee per person collected by the tour operator. This price reflects a 10% discount.
  - No charge for children 15 years of age and under. Changing in 2016.~~
3. Organized familiarization tour or staff orientations are encouraged and must be conducted separately from visitor tours; no site fee or special use fee will be required. Please contact the center director or assistant director at 789-6637 or 789-6636 prior to this visit or call 789-0097. These individuals will need to show documentation to the Forest Service staff at the center, they are not entered on the self-registration sheets nor reported as use.
4. Payments, late payments and nonpayment of Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act fees are subject to the fee payment penalties contained in the special use permit.
- ~~5. The Forest Service will not issue refunds to prepaid customers who choose not to enter the visitor center. Changing in 2016.~~
- ~~6. Wristbands will be used to identify passengers who have purchased a prepaid tour. These are government property. Changing in 2016.~~
- ~~7. Customers who arrive on non-prepaid tours may use their America the Beautiful Federal Recreational Lands Pass (Senior Pass (former Golden Age Pass), Annual Pass, Access Pass, Volunteer Pass, Military Pass) to gain entry to the Visitor Center. No refunds or billing adjustments will be made for prepaid customers who have these cards. Changing in 2016.~~

#### **Parking Information**

1. All customers must be dropped off and picked up at the identified stops (unloading/loading zones) for each type of tour and vehicle.
- 2. Parking along the shoulders of Glacier Spur Road or stopping on the road for salmon or bear viewing is prohibited.**

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#### **Tour Bus Operator/Driver Requirements**

##### **General**

1. Permit holders will share the information in this section with all drivers throughout the season so they are aware of these operational procedures and requirements.
2. Drivers will attend a **mandatory training meeting** at the Visitor Center on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 9am or May 14<sup>th</sup> at 9am in order to review these stipulations and receive other information.
3. Drivers will inform passengers that food and beverages (other than water) are prohibited at the Visitor Center Interpretive Site. If passengers have food they may leave it on the bus or must dispose of the food in the bear proof trash can nearest to their bus stop.

4. Drivers will inform passengers that the Visitor Center Interpretive Site is closed to smoking. There is one designated smoking area in the Pavilion parking lot. This includes e-cigarettes.
5. Drivers will orient passengers to the visitor center complex **prior** to arrival to reduce parking times. The Forest Service will provide a laminated orientation card to be handed to passengers. This card will be returned to the driver upon disembarkation.
6. There are four bear safety messages to convey: Stay on the trails. Never approach bears. Food is prohibited, especially for bears. Stay calm around bears, no running away.
7. ~~Drivers on other than prepaid tours will notify passengers of the fee at the visitor center. That fee can be paid at the front counter at the center or at the tiny bookstore near the Pavilion. Changing in 2016.~~
8. Drivers will comply with on-site direction from Forest Service personnel. No vehicle may block or obstruct traffic or traffic flow.
9. For public safety, all permitted drivers will encourage visitors to use the sidewalks and not use the road as a main pedestrian pathway.
10. All commercial vehicles, regardless of size, are required to turn off engines while loading and off-loading passengers, and while parked. An exception to this is when using wheel chair lifts that require the engine to be running.
11. Vehicles with mechanical problems (leaking air brakes, non-functioning speedometers, oil leaks, excess exhaust, etc.) will not be allowed into the Visitor Center Interpretive Site until mechanical problems are resolved.
12. ~~Wristbands are issued to companies who prepay the site fee for their passengers. Pass out wristbands prior to beginning travel to the visitor center and direct passengers to put them on their wrist prior to arrival. This will lessen vehicle and pedestrian congestion. Drivers will use a bag to collect the peel off tabs before their passengers leave their bus. Changing in 2016.~~
13. There is **no commercial parking allowed in the Pavilion parking lot** or in the Middle parking Lot. Only the bus parking lot can be used. The only exception is the single space available to Gastineau Guides in the Middle Lot.

#### **Driver Registration/Use Reporting**

14. With the exception of Gastineau Guiding, Cycle Alaska, Alaska Coach Tours and Holland American Princess (HAP), all drivers (~~Prepaid, Non-Prepaid~~, Shuttle and taxis) will enter the required information at the self-registration stations at each loading/unloading stop. Complete all the information on the self-registration sheet LEGIBLY. Drivers must not use an alias.
15. ~~Drivers for Prepaid passengers will provide a separate count for adults and for children **15** and under. Non-Prepaid and Shuttle trips may report simply total passengers or separate the count between adults and children. Changing in 2016.~~
16. Drivers will ensure accurate passenger counts are provided to the Forest Service staff and recorded correctly. Employees who are part of a familiarization tour, promotional visit or staff orientation arranged in advance with the Forest Service will not be counted in this total however they must display documentation (a letter, security pass, etc.) to verify their status. Otherwise, all passengers stepping off the bus must be reported.

#### **Unloading/Loading Passengers – New for 2015\*\***

17. There are four primary bus/van/taxi stops (unloading/loading areas) and one stop for use when all spaces are occupied. These are as follows:
  - a. Bear Stop: Shuttle buses use the location near the exit of the middle parking lot for loading and unloading. Be aware of people needing to depart the parking spaces blocked by your bus and accommodate them as possible. Park so as to allow continued access to and from the lot.

- b. Tern Stop: Holland America Princess Alaska and Alaska Coach Tours will pick up and drop off along the sidewalk south of the flagpoles. A maximum of five bus spaces are available.
  - c. Goat Stop: Tour operators other than HAP Alaska, Alaska Coach Tours, and shuttle busses will use this stop near the bus shelter for drop off and pick up if their vehicles are 22' or more in length. A maximum of two spaces are available in this zone. Maximum standing time for vehicles is 10 minutes.
  - d. Porcupine Stop: Taxi, limousine, jeep and van tours using vehicles less than 22 feet in length will unload and pick up in the Pavilion parking area west of the bus shelter at the spaces marked for commercial use. Wait times cannot exceed 10 minutes.
  - e. Salmon Stop: This alternate unloading area in the middle lot extends from the entry of the lot (just beyond the cross walk) to the yellow stripe just before the fish viewing platform. This area is used when all unloading/loading spots are filled and unavailable for unloading. This is not suitable for pickup except for Gastineau Guides. A visitor center staff member may direct drivers to this location.
18. All returning drivers are keenly aware of the congestion and delays you can experience while waiting to load or unload at the visitor center. The following are operational procedures we expect all drivers to implement to reduce congestion.
- a. All drivers must exit their bus and stand by the door when loading or unloading. This allows you to answer questions and direct people to the correct bus as needed.
  - b. The coach spaces at Tern Stop are 60 feet long allowing a bus to pull in or out even when buses are parked on either side. When you pull into a space, pull forward to the white line at the front of that space. Give your orientation talk and distribute wristbands prior to arrival at your designated unloading area. Prior to arrival please also remind passengers of items they may wish to take with them (or leave on the bus) during their visit to minimize passengers re-boarding for a sweater, handbag, etc.
  - c. As soon as you park in the unloading space, begin unloading passengers without delay. If you are loading, after the last passenger has boarded and is seated, depart the space.
  - d. Loading should be completed in less than 10 minutes. This includes waiting for late arriving passengers. In no case should your wait time exceed ten minutes. Information for passengers who miss their bus will be available at the kiosk.
  - e. We strongly discourage backing up buses to depart your loading/unloading zone.
  - f. Drivers are not to load or unload passengers outside the established loading/unloading spaces.
  - g. **New for 2015\*\* You are not allowed to arrive at your bus stop to pick up passengers until your designated pickup time. If you use the Goat or Tern Stop you are required to write your pickup time and bus number on the white-board by the stop.** HAPA and ACT coach drivers will write the ship name also.
  - h. Shuttle drivers unloading at the *Bear Stop* should provide orientation about how to get to the visitor center.